



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shirley L. Huntley

College Preparation

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Senator Shirley L. Huntley

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Senator Huntley Encourages Proper Planning for College Life

As the summer months come to a close, many young New Yorkers are heading off to college. This process can be intense and confusing, which is why Senator Shirley L. Huntley (D-Jamaica) encourages students and parents to take the time to make sure everything is in order at the start of the semester, including books, proper financial planning and living situation and expenses, among other concerns which can be more troublesome if left to deal with later on.

“Entering college is a major transition in a person’s life, and proper preparation for this move is extremely important to their experience,” Senator Huntley said.

In order to ensure this turning point in life goes smoothly, there are several steps students and their parents can take:

- Student health insurance—if you are not going to be covered by your parents plan find out if the college offers health coverage for students or look into other insurance options.
- Get as many scholarships as you can to help pay for college; college is expensive and you need all the help you can get; scholarships and grants don't end with the start of the semester.
- Find out how much financial aid you are eligible for and how much you may need to apply for in student loans (and review all details carefully with a financial aid professional).
- Research professors (www.ratemyprofessors.com) and courses to see what you may be interested in and what professors you would like to take classes with.
- Be sure to set aside about \$300-\$500 for books each semester. Purchasing used books from other students and the local bookstore can be a great money saving tool.
- Figure out a spending plan for a limited budget.
- Plan out how you want your dorm room to look and have all storage, bedding and other items in order before moving in.
- Contact your roommates ahead of time; make an effort to get to know them before going off to college.
- Get yourself an affordable laptop; having a quality laptop will greatly increase your productivity in college and you will find it very useful and convenient given the many locations now offering Wi-Fi connectivity.
- Plan your class schedule in a manner that fits your lifestyle. If you do not like getting up early, do not schedule an 8 am class.

- Familiarize yourself with all academic requirements for your college major of choice, and start planning out your entire school year to keep from getting closed out of a course you may need later on.
- Make sure to have the campus police phone number stored in your cell phone and just in case you do not have your phone, make sure you know how to reach them by other means.

Another important aspect of transitioning into college involves mental preparation. Students will interact with numerous students from all over with different types of personalities, culture, and ethnic background. Therefore, it is crucial to have a sense of cultural awareness and tolerance towards other individuals.

The senator added, “College is an extremely important and influential time in someone’s life, where students mature and discover new things about themselves while being exposed to a wide array of new people and places. By planning accordingly they place themselves on the right track for their next four years.”

For information on State and New York City schools, visit www.suny.edu/student/index.cfm and www.cuny.edu/future-students.html.

For more information on how to plan financially for college, visit www.hesc.com/content.nsf